



Ben Saliba – Ricci House President

Ricci House Mass Reflection

Action: the fact or process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim.

Good evening Father Chris, parents, staff, and fellow members of Ricci House.

Having the opportunity to stand up here tonight and reflect on my Xavier journey is an honour for which I will be eternally grateful for.

14 years ago, at the age of 3, I attended my first day at Xavier College Kostka Hall in 3-year-old kindergarten. Since then, I have changed a lot in many ways, but I am still the same determined kid that just wants to have a crack at everything. However, there is one main thing that has shaped me to be the person I am today. That is, the influences of the people that surround me. First off, the sacrifices that my parents have made to send me here is part of the reason why I don't take my time here for granted. I am lucky to have seen my 2 older brothers go through Xavier College too, which has allowed me to watch and be a part of their journeys' before I have completed my own. Despite sometimes spending 12 hours in a day at this school, the opportunity to pursue my genuine passions, meet new people and learn more about other people's stories is to why I call Xavier my second home. This, to me, is what makes this school unique.

The one outlying thing that is said to me by the majority of old boys is that I should enjoy my time here because before you know it, it's all gone. A famous quote from the great Ferris Bueller, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." In other words, take action on the opportunities that you are most passionate for before time goes and regrets come in. You may not be able to change history, but you can make a difference in the moment.

In the gospel reading presented, we hear Jesus encouraging Simon and his friends to take action. At first Simon was skeptical when asked by Jesus to go out in deep water and let down his nets, as he replied that they had been trying all night and had no luck. In the end Simon listened, and ended up catching an abundance of fish. The gospel reading comes to an end with the line, "from now on you will be catching people." This suggests that they will be engaging with others in relationship and community. The way I interpret this is that we should all take action on the opportunities that are presented to us (in the numerous areas at the school) because, like Simon, good things will come from it. That, you will find genuine enjoyment and happiness pursuing these passions,

which will ultimately shape you into the person that you become when your time at Xavier is finished.

When I reflect on my journey through Xavier, there are many things that come to mind. However, the ones that stand out are the experiences and relationships that I have, which have created memories that I will always cherish and never forget. Going from Kostka Hall to the Senior Campus was a big thing. My cohort at Kostka was around 65, and then we all got thrown into one that consisted upwards of 250 people. I brought myself there with my best mates, some of which I had known since kindergarten, my love for playing sport, and also music. I didn't really know what to expect. The only thing I had to go off was that my brothers reckoned, "it was pretty easy." Well, I guess it did work itself out.

The House system provided a small community type feeling and the tutor groups gave a sense of family, where there was a consistent group of people I saw every day on the infamous B level. This played a massive role in guiding and supporting me through my years at the Senior Campus. I found myself not wasting any time in getting to know some of the Burke Hall boys, forming strong relationships and being able to stand up here today and see them as people that play a major part in my life. That's the beauty of Xavier. The opportunity to explore the different areas of the school and meet people who all share a common interest. The USA basketball tour provided an experience with memories that I'll never forget. Forming bonds with older and younger students that are still held within our basketball squad, which we use on weekly basis to eagerly compete against other APS schools. Also, the music program has allowed me to go to places like the Generations in Jazz Festival in Mount Gambia to compete and learn from extremely talented professionals like James Morrison.

Perhaps the key message in what I'm trying to say is that I encourage you to give your all and make the most out of your time at Xavier. Take a moment to appreciate the opportunities that present and the people that surround you. Learn from others' journeys to inspire you to create your own. You may not be able to change history, but you can make a difference in the moment. I'm thankful for my time at Xavier College and I look forward to delving into my last few difficult, yet entertaining months here. To the students in the younger year levels, I encourage you to set goals and write your own journey. To the year 12's, I hope you enjoy every last second here and that you can all finish your journey with everlasting memories of your time here.

Thank you.

Sursum Corda.

